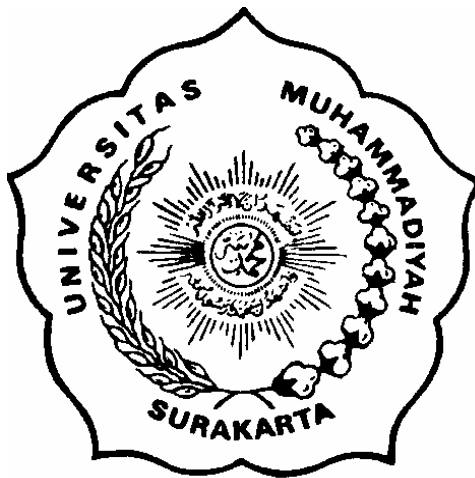


PUBLICATION ARTICLE

**VALUE OF TOLERANCE IN GINA PRINCE'S *THE
SECRET LIFE OF BEES* MOVIE (2008):
A MARXIST APPROACH**



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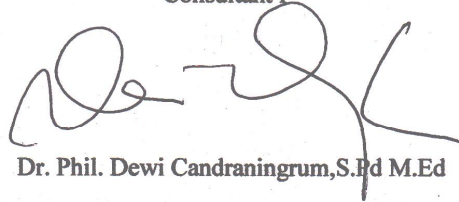
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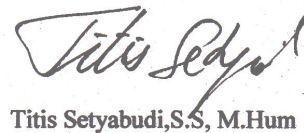
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A MARXIST APPROACH**

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SUMMARY

The problem of the study is to reveal value of tolerance reflected in *The Secret Life of Bees* movie directed by Gina Prince Bythewood published in 2008. The objectives of the study are to analyze the film based on structural analysis and based on the Marxist analysis.

This study is descriptive qualitative study. The object of the study is *The Secret Life of Bees* movie directed by Gina Prince Bythewood. The data sources are divided into two namely primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is the film itself and the secondary data source is the other source related to the analysis such as references, author biography, criticisms relation to the problem and material related to the study whether picking up from books or internet. The methods of data collection are observation and library research. The technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis.

The outcome of the study is shown in the following conclusion. First, based on the structural analysis, Gina Prince delivers a message that the blacks have a high tolerance in the discrimination. Tolerance is important in the society, as black and white must be tolerance. The black just want a little respect from the whites as a human being. Racial discrimination can be changed with tolerance because the blacks have rights to live in the world. Second, based on Marxist analysis, Gina Prince

reflects the racial discrimination by present Marxist issues in this movie. The blacks can be survived with the race prejudice which comes from the whites.

Key Words: *The Secret Life of Bees*, Value, Tolerance.

1. Introduction

The Secret Life of Bees is a movie about race relation. The screenplay of this film is adapted from the novel with the same title written by Sue Monk Kidd. Sue Monk Kidd is an American novelist and author of non-fiction who was born on August 12, 1948 in Albany. She is most famous for the novel *The Secret Life of Bees*. This novel becomes nomination for the Orange Prize England and it chosen as Good Morning America's Read This Book Club.

The Secret Life of Bees movie is directed by Gina Prince Bythewood, an America director and screenplay by Gina Prince Bythewood too. She was born on June 10, 1969 in America. Bythewood lives in South California with her husband, Reggie Bythewood. Movie by Gina Prince Bythewood are *Love and Basket ball* (2000), *Disappearing Acts* (2000) and *The Secret Life of Bees* (2008).

The Secret Life of Bees is a movie about a young white girl, Lily Owens. The movie opens in 1964, during the civil rights movement. Lily is fourteen years old; she has a father and no mother. The first scene is opened with Lily's voiceover, "I killed my mother when I was four years old, that's what I know about my self. She was all I wanted and I took her always. Nothing else much mattered". In the night, Lily sees many bees in her room and she tells her father. Her father can't believe and yells at her to go back to bed. Frustrated, Lily runs to their peach tree and digs up a box she buried there. The box contains her mother's gloves, a small photograph of mother and a flat wood caving of the Black Marry or Madonna.

The next morning, Rosaleen the black housekeeper surprises Lily with a cake for 14th birthday. On TV, they see that the civil rights bill passed. Rosaleen says to T-Ray that she is going to take Lily to town to buy a training bra. When Rosaleen and Lily walk down town, they are confronted by three racist men who result Rosaleen and ask her, if she can spell her name. Rosaleen pours her jar of spit to spell out her name on their feet. She is beaten up and arrested. Suddenly, the police are invited Rosaleen to the hospital colored word. Lily goes to the hospital colored word to find Rosaleen. They run away to a town where Lily's mother was thought to have once lived called Tiburon. They find a honey jar with the same picture of the Virgin Marry that Lily had. They are leading to the house of August Boatwright on her sisters, June and May Boatwright. Boatwright's family who made the honey jars with Black Mary's picture. Lily questions August as to why she uses black Mary's picture. August claim that Mary was set by God to help Africa-Americans have peace and quality.

One day, Lily meets Zachary Taylor, a young black man in the Boatwright's house and they become friends. They go to town for delivering honey. After that they decide to watch the movie together, but Lily sits in the colored section. Suddenly, the police are invited Zach to the police office. The police say to Lily that she is Negro lover. Lily shows August the picture of her mother and August recognizes her as Deborah Owens. Lily says to August that she was killing her mother. Later on, T-Ray comes to Boatwright's house looking for Lily. T-Ray gives August permission to take care of Lily for as long as in Boatwright's house. Lily's voiceover states that she thought as T-Ray drove off saying "Lily, you'll be better off her with all of these mothers". Lily gets meaning of life from Boatwright's family. Lily also gets value of tolerance from Boatwright's family.

The secret Life of Bees was made January 7, 2008. This film was taken for 48 days, which is the setting of place at Tiburon, South Carolina USA and

setting of time is summer season, 1964. The film runtime is 110 minutes, released in VCD and DVD distributed by Fox Searchlight Pictures. In United States it is played in 18 weeks from it firstly released on October 17, 2008. The successful of *The Secret Life of Bees* also happens in Philippines played 2 weeks. The good response from public makes *The Secret Life of Bees* which only had \$11,000,000 for their budget; finally gain \$38,105,395 for their world wide gross.

There are three reasons why the writer chooses *The Secret Life of Bees*. The first is *The Secret Life of Bees* has uncommon story; about racial discrimination. The story is about racial relation between a white girl and a black's family. This story is not only racial discrimination; it is also a meaning of life and tolerance between a white girl and a black's family. The second aspect is the visualization and the cast of the movie. In this film, Dakota Fanning who plays very well as Lily Owens makes the character of Lily alive. The last is the passion for humanity that is reflected in this movie. *The Secret Life of Bees* is an uplifting affirmation of the human spirit. It shows to the audiences that even black family's love.

Problem Statement in this research is "How is the value of tolerance reflected in *The Secret Life of Bees* movie?"

Limitation of the Study in this research, the writer focuses this research to analyze the value of tolerance in Gina Prince's *The Secret Life of Bees* movie based on a Marxist Approach.

Objectives of the Study based on the problem that has been stated above, the objectives of the study are as follows: (1) to analyze Gina Prince's *The Secret Life of Bees* movie based on the structural elements of the movie and (2) to describe the value of tolerance in Gina Prince's *The Secret Life of Bees* movie based on a Marxist approach.

Literature Review the first study about *The Secret Life of Bees* movie is conducted Carrisa Smith (2009), a writer at Entertainment Weekly entitled

“Spirituality and Position of Woman in The Secret Life of Bees: A feminism Study”. In this paper she uses the life of August Boatwright as a study for demonstrating how is the spirit life and the position of black woman in the civil rights. The result is that love, justice, freedom and the passion of humanity, succeed to arouse August Boatwright from isolation and racial discrimination in the civil rights.

The second research is conducted by Rachelle Bretagne (2008), a Senior Manager at Helium Website, entitled *“Struggle’s Lily Owens to Get True Life: An Individual Psychological”*. The result is that love, freedom, tolerance and future, succeed to arouse Lily from her trauma. The outcome of the paper shows that the struggle of Lily who wants to get true life, brings her into positive impact that influences her character.

The third study about *The Secret Life of Bees* conducted by Lisa Wade, a Nevada State College (2009), entitled *“ A Psychoanalytic Study of August Boatwright’s Reasons To Save the Whites In Gina Prince’s The Secret Life of Bees”*. The result of the data shows that Boatwright’s id is dominant and the imbalance of August Boatwright’s id, ego, and superego does not always end in bad things, but it can result in good things as Boatwright does. She tries to give a moral message through this novel that life is about love and respect.

The fourth research is conducted by Camerin Courtney (2008), a writer at Christianity Today entitled *“Independent Black Woman: A Feminism Study”*. Courtney uses the life of August Boatwright for demonstrating how the black woman struggle to achieve her independent in the civil rights. The result is that freedom, glory and future, success to arouse Boatwright’s family from racial discrimination in the civil rights.

The last research is conducted by Kelly Budd (2009), a writer at Heartwarming Read entitled *“Struggle’s The Blacks to Get Freedom: An Individual Psychological”*. Budd uses the life of August Boatwright for

demonstrating how the struggle's Boatwright to get freedom in the civil rights. The result is that love, tolerance, respect and future, success to arouse August Boatwright from isolated and racial discrimination in the civil rights.

The differences between the writer and the five previous writers are the theme and perspective. Carrisa Smith writes about the spirituality and position of woman by using Feminism Perspective. Rachelle Bretagne writes about the struggle's Lily Owens to get true life by using Individual Psychological Perspective. Lisa Wade writes about the reasons why August Boatwright saves the Whites by using Psychoanalytic Perspective. Camerin Courtney writes about independent black woman by using Feminism Perspective and Kelly Budd writes about the struggle of black people to get freedom by using an Individual Perspective, while the writer means to analyze *The Secret Life of Bees* movie based on Marxist perspective. The writer analyzes the value of tolerance in Gina Prince's *The Secret Life of Bees* movie by using a Marxist Approach.

Research Method In this research, the writer uses descriptive qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using literary data. It purposes to analyze the movie using a Marxist approach. The steps to conduct this research are (1) determining the type of study, (2) determining the data and data source, (3) determining the object of the study, (4) determining technique of data collection, and (5) determining technique of data analysis. The object of the study is *The Secret Life of Bees* movie directed by Gina Prince Bythewood and published in United States of America 2008. It is analyzed by using a Marxist approach.

There are two data sources that are needed to do this research (1) Primary Data Source, the primary data source are the film and script *The Secret Life of Bees* movie directed by Gina Prince Bythewood from United States of America and adapted from the novel with the same title by Sue

Monk Kidd, (2) Secondary Data Source, the secondary data sources are the biography of the author, the websites in the internet about the movie and the other resources that support to analyze.

The technique of data collection is library research, the steps are: watching the movie several time, reading the English subtitles, determining the character that will be analyzed, taking note of important parts in both primary and secondary data, classifying and determining the relevant data, taking notes from the material and some other resources related to the movie. The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the movie and a Marxist approach.

2. Marxist Theory

a. Notion of Marxism

Marxism is the political philosophy and practice derived from the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marxism is an economic political theory by which law and money are considered instruments of oppression and control, and which the ruling class uses against the work class. Marxism is an ideology that studies the social, economical, historical, revolutionary problems based on the social conflicts in the society (marxis.org: 2000).

b. Principle of Marxism

1. Dialectical Materialism

Dialectical materialism is the philosophical approach of Karl Marx and his followers which was very much influenced by the dialectical thinking of Hegel (Fargacs, 1986: 167). Dialectical accounts for the world change that cannot be expected. It only can up if the people aware that this materialism is dynamism thing and a processing of developing from bottom to upon steps. Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis are the main concept dialectical materialism; Hegel used those concept apply the main's response

2. Historical Materialism

Historical materialism is the Marxist methodology for interpreting history. According to Marx (Cantor, 1971: 632), “Historical materialism is material view history, the conception assumes that the history of societies develop as a result of inevitable pattern of social and economic change. The social, political, and ethical institutions and values society are determined by the changing relationship of it member to the means of production of social change is the classification of class society and society is divided to classes.

3. Alienation

The definition of alienation above has specific meaning. Marx suggested that alienation process is expressed in work and labor classification, where the labor cannot recognize himself because of the capitalist, who master their product (Fargacs, 1986: 63). The product which is produced by labor is not her product but the product of capitalist, but alienation can be overcome by restoring the truly human relationship to the labor process. Therefore, alienation is focused on transferring to ownership of the other.

4. Class Struggle

Class struggle is a fundamental theory and as a central part of Marxism. It is a hypothesis used by Karl Marx to explain a movement. Class struggle is the result of the contradiction between production method and productive relationship that happened through the classes in the society (Sargent, 1981; 86-87). The proletariat is anyone who earns their live hood by selling their labor power and being paid a wage or salary for their labor time. They have little choice but to work for Capital, since they typically have no independent way to survive.

5. Revolution

Revolution, according to Merriam Webster Dictionary, is “Activity or movement designed to effect fundamental changes in the socioeconomic situation”. Revolution is product of class struggle. The proletariat is getting more and more stable. It is supported with historical materialism, dialectical materialism, and alienation. Therefore, revolution is final from historical materialism, dialectical materialism, class struggle, and alienation. Revolutions produce the best result to make better condition.

c. Value of Tolerance

1. Notion of Tolerance

Tolerance, according to Merriam Webster Dictionary, means to tolerate or put up with differences. It means showing respect for the race, religion, age, gender, opinions, and ideologies of other people or groups. Tolerance can show in many ways.

2. Aspect of Tolerance

a) Permitting or Allowing

Permitting is give authorization or consent to someone to do something.

b) A Conduct or Point of View

Conduct is a set of rules outlining the responsibilities of or proper practices for an individual. A conduct of tolerance can show in many ways such as social, ethnic and religious.

c) Respecting the Person in the Process

Respecting is gives a positive feeling of deference for a person or other entity, such as a nation

3. Characteristics of Tolerance

Tolerance does not mean to embrace or to even accept. In fact, it s impossible to tolerate something you like or embrace. Tolerance is

not an absolute virtue. It has its limits. For anyone will admit that he is intolerant of certain things. In fact, we ought to be intolerant of certain things.

3. Research Finding

1. Dialectical Materialism

The Secret Life of Bees movie shows the process of dialectical materialism. Lily and Rosaleen change their life; it can be seen as this process. Thesis comes when Lily save Rosaleen from hospital.

Lily : Rosaleen. They beat you again? We gotta get you out of here.
Rosaleen : I can't get out of here. I'm jail. You shouldn't be. That's gotta go.
Lily : Rosaleen!
Rosaleen : This is crazy.
Lily : Oh, It'll be all right. It'll be all right.

(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 00:15:32)

2. Historical Materialism

The historical materialism can be reflected in the story of *The Secret Life of Bees* movie. It is reflected in the form of character and characterization. The character is divided into two groups, they are oppressor and oppressed. They have no production, no power, and no authority so they must struggle to get better life. Rosaleen feels to be oppressed by the whites in her society. She has no rights to vote by the whites. The white thinks that the blacks are dumb person.

Frank : Well, well. We ain't gotta worry about this one. Can't register to vote. If you can't write your own name. Tell me, Lily. She's a smart nigger or a dumb nigger.
Lily : Please, mister, we really need
Frank : Answer me, girl.

(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 00:12:11)

3. Alienation

Alienation occurs when Lily and Rosaleen went to town, they meet three racist man. The whites in the town aren't friendly with Rosaleen.

Frank : Hey. Ain't you T-Ray's little girl?
Lily : Yes, sir. Lily.
Frank : Daddy know you out here with her?
Lily : Rosaleen works for us.

Frank : Whole lot of niggers been coming through here today. You wouldn't be going to that secret meetin', would ya?
(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 00:12:05)

4. Class Struggle

In this movie, struggle occurs when August produces the honey with Negro Mary's picture. She wants to be like the white, who have a big business in the society.

Lily : Where did you get those?
Seller : Oh, I know what you mean. Virgin Mary's pictured as a colored woman. But, see, the woman that makes the honey is colored herself. Best honey in South Carolina.
Lily : What is her name?
Seller : August Boatwright.
Lily : Do you know where she lives?
Seller : Darndest house you ever saw. Painted Pepto Bismol. Your grandma's probably see it.

(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 00:20:39)

5. Revolution

Revolution in this movie happened when Zachary decided to change her desire. He wants to be drum majors, not a lawyer again. He is afraid and he won't arrest again.

Zach : Hey.
Lily : Hey. What happened to you?
Zach : What about it?
Lily : It changed you, didn't it?
Zach : Sometimes, Lily I..I get so angry. I just want to kill something.
Lily : The men that took you. They're angry like that too. Makes 'em mean. You have to promise me, Zach, that you won't be like them.
Zach : I don't want to.
Lily : Me either.
Zach : No way. I'm not becoming a lawyer now. I'm gonna be one of them drum majors. Dr. King talks about.
Lily : know you will.

(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 01:44:13)

6. Value of Tolerance

The Secret Life of Bees movie shows the process of tolerance. Rosaleen is giving surprise to Lily by making a cake for her in Lily's birthday. This process shows that there is no boundary between blacks and

whites, because they have tolerance for each others. The blacks should not be differential because of their colored skin.

Rosaleen : Look at ya. Happy birthday.
Lily : I didn't know you made me a cake.
Rosaleen : Off course. I did. It's your birthday. How big a piece you want?
Lily : Real big.

(*The Secret Life of Bees*, 00:11:05)

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, the researcher would like to draw the conclusion as follows:

First, based on structural analysis, *The Secret Life of Bees* movie has a close relationship with the social reality of American racist society in the middle of twentieth century in United States. In the movie, Gina Prince Bythewood describes tolerance between the blacks and the whites to survive their life. In delivery the message, Prince Bythewood creates the major character, August Boatwright. She has a high tolerance in racial discrimination. August Boatwright gives a help to Lily Owens, a white girl

Second, based on the Marxist analysis, Gina Prince Bythewood reflects the racial discrimination by present Marxist issues in this movie. The blacks as the lower class struggle against the discrimination to seek in better life which is begun by several conflicts to reach their goals in life. On the other hand, the whites as the high class, who have power and authority discriminate the blacks because the blacks are always poor and being oppressed. In social condition, the blacks and the whites are being separated. The blacks must be stay in their own community, and the whites stay in their own community. Racial discrimination can be changed with tolerance because; the blacks have rights to live in the world. Gina Prince Bythewood expresses the class division by dividing the character into two groups: the oppressor (the whites) and oppressed (the blacks).

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